

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5016, FINANCIAL SERVICES AND GENERAL GOVERNMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2015, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4718, BONUS DEPRECIATION MODIFIED AND MADE PERMANENT

Mr. COLE, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 113-517) on the resolution (H. Res. 661) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5016) making appropriations for financial services and general government for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4718) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify and make permanent bonus depreciation, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2015

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 641 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 4923.

Will the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) kindly take the chair.

□ 1807

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 4923) making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes, with Mr. HOLDING (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose earlier today, an amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) had been disposed of and the bill had been read through page 19, line 14.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. MCCLINTOCK

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 19, line 12, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$22,000,000)”.

Page 20, line 11, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$9,810,000)”.

Page 21, line 2, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$30,935,000)”.

Page 26, line 24, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$9,551,000)”.

Page 52, line 20, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$49,062,000)”.

Page 59, line 20, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$121,358,000)”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 641, the gentleman from California and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, ever since 1835, the rules of the House have forbidden spending money except for purposes authorized by law. Yet last year, the eleven appropriations bills reported out of the House Appropriations Committee contained over \$350 billion in spending on unauthorized programs. The rule against unauthorized spending cannot be enforced because it is always waived by the resolutions that bring these appropriations to the floor.

The bill before us today contains \$24 billion in such unauthorized spending for programs that have not been reviewed by the authorizing committees since as far back as 1980. That was Jimmy Carter's last year in office.

Now, I am sure that some of these programs are valuable and worthy of taxpayer dollars, but surely, others are not. The fact that they have not been authorized in as much as 35 years ought to warn us to be at least a little more careful about continuing to fund them.

Rather than reviewing our spending decisions and making tough choices about spending priorities, Congress simply rubberstamps these programs out of habit. It is no wonder we are so deeply in debt with so little to show for it. My amendment does not defund these unauthorized programs, as the House rules would require. It simply freezes spending on them at last year's levels.

The cuts contained in this amendment total just \$121 million, which is about 0.036 percent of the total spending in this bill.

If year after year, the authorizing committees haven't found these programs worth the time to reauthorize, then maybe that is just nature's way of telling us they aren't worth the money we are shoveling at them either.

It is the proper role of the House of Representatives to control the purse strings of our government. But we do a disservice to our constituents when we allow this kind of spending growth to occur on autopilot, absent any oversight or congressional authorization.

I look forward to the day when Congress will again assert its constitutional prerogative to control Federal spending and enforce its own rules to prohibit spending blindly on unauthorized programs.

However, in the meantime, adopting this amendment will merely freeze the spending in these unauthorized programs, shaving just 0.036 percent of this appropriation. By freezing that spending on unauthorized programs, I hope that will be a small symbolic step toward reclaiming the House's responsibility to act as a watchdog over the Treasury.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. KAPTUR. I rise in opposition to the gentleman's proposal.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Ohio is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Chairman, the gentleman stood up earlier this afternoon and was trying to cut from really essential accounts. And I accept his desire to try to balance the budget.

When his party shut down the government and threw the wrench of shutdown into every program that the Nation depends upon, it created quite a bit of chaos around here and around the country. Money was wasted on furloughs. The military was trying to decide how they were going to rotate different operations and so forth. It was a terrible period that we lived through. And we are still taking and gluing our programs back together after all of that.

Some of the work of the authorizing committees, under your leadership, were not able to clear their bills on time. So the gentleman's solution is to say, well, you know, none of that happened. So I am just going to take this opportunity to go after the Energy and Water bill and kind of take this and this and this and propose this amendment.

And I think that the gentleman's goal of fiscal responsibility is one that I share, but this isn't the way to do it. This isn't the way to kind of pick some programs, and we don't even know what impact it will have across the country.

□ 1815

I would rather have a much more thoughtful presentation that would come before us. What programs is he talking about? The same ones this afternoon he was trying to cut, the renewable energy program—he is talking about cutting nuclear and fossil energy.

He really doesn't like the Department of Energy. I bet, if you ask the gentleman, he doesn't even want the Department of Energy to exist for our country. If you look around the world, I am probably not wrong on that bet, so this is just another way to try to cause havoc over at the Department of Energy.

As I have said earlier today, I view what is happening in that Department as one of the most important strategic sets of investments that this country has to make.

Why create more havoc over there? We have had difficulties in trying to balance our energy accounts over the years. Imported petroleum still constitutes 40 percent of what Americans are paying for. The average family, every year, \$2,800 comes out of their pocket for gasoline.

Mr. Chairman, we need to modernize our fleet. There is a lot of natural gas conversions going on in the country for our truck fleets. We need not throw a wrench into that. We need to hasten it, to move America to a new day.

We need a modernized grid, whatever that is going to look like. We need to